GAO/HRD-89-3

United States General Accounting Office

GAO

Report to Congressional Requesters

COMPLETED
89

March 1989

MILITARY CHILD CARE

Extensive, Diverse, and Growing

GAO/HRD-89-3

GAO

United States
General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

Human Resources Division

B-207217

March 8, 1989

The Honorable John Warner
United States Senate

The Honorable Frank R. Wolf
House of Representatives

This report, in response to your request, discusses the military child care services provided by the Department of Defense at Air Force, Army, Navy, and Marine Corps installations in the continental United States.

The report describes, at one point in time, (1) the types of child care services provided in installations' child development centers and family day care homes, (2) the number and characteristics of children who were to receive child care in centers, and (3) the number of children who were on the centers' waiting lists. The report does not contain any recommendations, but does present matters for congressional consideration.

As arranged with your offices, unless you publicly announce its contents earlier, we plan no further distribution of this report until 30 days from its issue date. At that time, we will send copies to the Secretaries of Defense, the Air Force, the Army, and the Navy, and other interested parties. We will make copies available to others on request.

This report was prepared under the direction of Linda G. Morra, Director, Congressionally Requested Studies. Other major contributors to this report are listed in appendix V.

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Executive Summary

Purpose

For parents in all sectors of society, the availability of child care is an issue of great significance. In the military, the demand for child care services has exceeded the supply at most installations (military bases). Because of concerns about the impact of this child care shortage on productivity, morale, attendance, and family life, Senator John Warner and Representative Frank R. Wolf requested that GAO study child care services provided by the Department of Defense (DOD) at Air Force, Army, Navy, and Marine Corps installations in the continental United States.

The objectives of GAO's review were to determine (1) why and how DOD provides child care, (2) what child care services are available, (3) how many children of what ages are receiving care, and (4) how many children are waiting for care.

Background

DOD provides child care to service members because it believes that this maintains their readiness, increases productivity, and improves morale. DOD also believes that military families often face special problems. For example, because military families are required to move periodically, they usually (1) cannot rely on extended family help in caring for their children and (2) do not have the support of an established neighborhood. In addition, DOD has stated that private sector child care often is unavailable, too expensive, and not of the type needed by service members because of their unusual working hours, which can include night and weekend duty.

Military child care is provided on installations primarily through child development centers and family day care homes. Care in a center is given by trained caregivers on a fee-for-service basis. Care in family day care homes is given in government housing, usually by a trained military spouse, at a rate agreed to by the caregiver and the families needing care. The military supports child care by (1) paying for child development center construction and renovation, (2) subsidizing about one-third of the total operating costs for the centers, and (3) providing for the oversight of family day care homes.

GAO surveyed over 200 installations in the continental United States (the United States excluding Alaska and Hawaii) that were identified by the four military services as operating child development centers.

Results in Brief

The military provides most of its child care at child development centers, which are designed to (1) offer care at a lower cost than private

sector care and at more convenient locations and (2) provide services that may not be available in the private sector. These centers are likely, therefore, to continue to attract service members seeking care for their children (see p. 29).

As of February 9, 1988, child development centers and family day care homes had the combined capacity to care for about 62,000 children at the same time, an 82-percent increase over the end of fiscal year 1984. During this period, center capacity increased by about 25 percent; day care home capacity increased by over 600 percent (see p. 29).

In spite of this growth, centers cannot currently meet demand. Of the installations GAO surveyed, 185 maintained waiting lists of interested parents. These lists contained the names of about 24,700 children (see p. 33). While waiting to be selected for center care, parents are likely to use a variety of other forms of care (see p. 35).

DOD gives the children of service members first priority for child care services. However, because all the children of service members cannot be served, some installations set priorities within this first priority category, giving the top priority to children of single parents or parents who are both in the military (see p. 36).

Principal Findings

Child Development Centers

Child development centers had the capacity to care for 38,505 children at the surveyed installations, with various services available. All offered full-day care; the largest group of children, about 53 percent, who were to attend centers for full-day care on February 9, 1988, were between 3 and 5 years old (preschool age). Furthermore, 98 percent offered hourly care, and 83 percent offered part-day care. Additional services designed to meet the specific needs of service members were available at some installations. About 4 percent indicated the availability of 24-hour extended care; 19 percent, night care; and 42 percent, weekend care. However, DOD has indicated that all centers can provide 24-hour care when required to do so because of mission requirements.

The parents of children who were to attend full-day care were primarily married couples with one military and one civilian parent. About 12 percent of the children had parents who were single, and 16 percent had

parents who were both in the military. However, 6 percent had civilian parents working for DOD (see pp. 20-25).

Family Day Care Homes

On February 9, 1988, 126 of the surveyed installations had family day care homes. Taken together, these installations had 4,557 day care homes with a capacity to serve 23,719 children at the same time. (Some installations not included in GAO's survey may also operate family day care homes.) Although GAO did not determine how many day care homes on each installation offered each type of care, all day care home programs on the 126 installations offered full-day care. About 98 percent of installations' day care home programs offered part-day care; at least 75 percent indicated that weekend, night, and extended 24-hour care were available. These types of care were generally more available in day care homes than in child development centers. In addition, compared with centers, day care homes offered care more frequently to the youngest children (see pp. 25-27).

Children Waiting for Care

A total of 24,729 children were on waiting lists for center care, and about 80 percent of them were listed for full-day care. Children through the age of 17 months accounted for about 22 percent of the children on waiting lists (see pp. 33-34). DOD gives the children of service members first priority for child care services. However, of the 185 installations with waiting lists, about 53 percent indicated that children were selected from the list on a first-come, first-served basis. The other 47 percent gave top priority to certain family characteristics of service members, such as single parents or both parents in the military (see p. 36).

Program Growth

The program has grown: At the end of fiscal year 1984, child development centers had the capacity to serve 30,751 children at the same time; by February 9, 1988, the capacity had increased to 38,505. In fiscal year 1985, total operating costs for centers worldwide were $101.6 million; by fiscal year 1987, costs had increased to $134.3 million. Of these costs, federally appropriated funds increased by about 39 percent—from $31.4 million in fiscal year 1985 to $43.6 million in fiscal year 1987. About $91 million was obligated for center construction projects during 1985-87 (see pp. 30-31). The program can only continue to grow if centers are renovated or constructed.

At the end of fiscal year 1984, the installations GAO surveyed had 764 family day care homes, which could provide care to 3,363 children. By

February 9, 1988, the program capacity had grown to 23,719. As long as government housing units are available and individuals want to provide the care, family day care homes can grow at a lesser cost to the government than that for centers (see pp. 31-32).

Matters for Congressional Consideration

The large number of requests for child development center care means that long-range decisions are facing the military—as to who should receive this care—and the Congress—as to how much support the program will receive through appropriated dollars. As interest in the program grows, the Congress and the military will need to consider whether center care should be made available for all military parents who want this care or whether program eligibility for military parents should be limited. These decisions would involve balancing the cost of program expansion and operation against DOD's stated benefits of maintaining readiness, increasing productivity, and improving morale. In the interim, however, when center capacity is not adequate, installations may need to continue to expand the family day care home program (see p. 36).

Agency Comments

DOD concurred with GAO's review results. Although DOD supports the continued expansion of the family day care home program, as suggested by GAO, DOD stated that the current demand for military child care requires that it (1) develop all types of care and (2) continue to upgrade, replace, and expand child development centers (see pp. 36-37).

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Abbreviations

CONUS	continental United States
DOD	Department of Defense
GAO	General Accounting Office
MWR	morale, welfare, and recreation

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Introduction

Since 1978, the Department of Defense (DOD) has officially supported child care programs as part of employee services at installations (military bases). Although child care capacity has grown significantly over the last few years, so has the number of single parents, families with both parents in the military (the four services), and military personnel with working spouses. The growing interest in obtaining child care services at installations has helped assure that the demand for such services continues to exceed the supply.

Because of concerns about the impact of a child care shortage on productivity, morale, attendance, and family life, Senator John Warner and Representative Frank R. Wolf requested that GAO study child care services provided by DOD at Air Force, Army, Navy, and Marine Corps installations in the continental United States (CONUS).[1]

Military Child Care Is Changing

The military has been involved in child care for many years, beginning as custodial care (that is, baby-sitting services) provided by private groups—such as parents or wives' clubs. The settings for this child care were usually buildings originally designed for other purposes—such as barracks, dining halls, and bowling alleys—which often failed to meet fire, safety, and health standards.

In 1978, child care was first recognized as an official morale, welfare, and recreation (MWR) activity, eligible for DOD funding. Other MWR activities include libraries, gymnasiums, and theaters. Under DOD Directive 1330.2 (Mar. 17, 1978), the DOD assistant secretary (for Manpower, Reserve Affairs, and Logistics) was given overall responsibility for MWR activities; each military service was made responsible for developing its own program policies and standards; and installations were expected to establish their own operating procedures if they decided to provide child care.

Child care is usually provided in one of two settings—child development centers and family day care homes. Care in a child development center is most often given by trained caregivers on a fee-for-service basis, collected by the center. In authorized family day care homes, care for up to six children is provided in government-owned or government-leased housing by an approved trained individual, usually a military spouse.

[1] "CONUS" is defined as the United States except for Alaska and Hawaii.

All arrangements, including fees charged, are made directly between the caregiver and the families of children needing care.[1]

In a 1982 report,[2] GAO criticized DOD for not meeting generally accepted quality standards in its child care programs. As a result of the GAO report, each military service revised its guidance for operating child development centers and family day care homes and improved such areas as child-to-caregiver ratios, staff training, and program content. In addition, the military services (1) renovated existing child development centers and built new ones and (2) expanded the number of family day care homes.

How Child Care Is Administered

The DOD assistant secretary (for Force Management and Personnel) is the DOD Secretary's principal adviser for (1) military and civilian manpower, as well as personnel matters, and (2) policy development and guidance related to areas such as community services for DOD personnel and their dependents; morale, discipline, and welfare; and commissaries and post exchanges. The DOD deputy assistant secretary (for Family Support, Education, and Safety) develops DOD's overall child care policies and coordinates them among the military services. Each military service, however, (1) develops and implements its own separate and independent child care policies, consistent with those of DOD, and (2) administers its own program.

Each military service's child care program follows similar policies, but differs in administration. In the Air Force, the child care program is part of MWR and is administered with other MWR activities, such as bowling and golf. The Navy's program is similarly organized and is in the MWR Division. Although the Marine Corps, in the past, included child care as a "recreation and morale support" (MWR) activity, the program was moved, on July 1, 1987, to Family Programs in the Human Resources Division. The Army has designated child care as a Community and Family Support activity and manages its program with other family-oriented services.

At the time of our review, the Air Force and Army had a more centralized system for administering their child care programs than the Marine Corps or the Navy. The Air Force required each installation to report

[1] The military services refer to the caregiver in the family day care home program as a "provider."

[2] Military Child Care Programs: Progress Made, More Needed (GAO/FPCD-82-30, June 1, 1982).

program-related information to headquarters every 6 months. Through this semiannual reporting process, the Air Force gathered a variety of program data, including information on fees, as well as the number of children attending and the number of children on a waiting list. The Army gathered program data through annual reports submitted by each installation. The Navy and the Marine Corps gathered data, but less frequently, through surveys of installations' child care programs. In commenting on our report, the Navy stated that it is implementing a semiannual reporting process; the first reporting period will begin January 1, 1989.

Installation officials make the decisions about the operation and management of child care programs. These decisions cover a wide range of management alternatives, including whether to (1) offer child development centers or family day care homes or both, (2) expand existing programs or facilities, (3) limit the age range of children receiving care, and (4) provide all types of child care services.

Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

Senator John Warner and Representative Frank R. Wolf requested that we study the child care services provided by DOD at installations. The primary objectives of this study were to determine (1) why and how DOD provides child care; (2) what child care services are available to military personnel in the Air Force, Army, Navy, and Marine Corps; (3) the number and characteristics of children receiving child care; and (4) the number of children waiting for child care. We obtained information on care provided to children (through the age of 12) in child development centers and family day care homes at installations in CONUS identified by the four military services as having child development centers.

We reviewed literature on child care issues, interviewed representatives of selected national child care organizations, and reviewed studies on child care. We met with DOD officials in the Office of Family Policy and Support, Military Family Resource Center, Military Manpower and Personnel Policy Office, and Defense Manpower Data Center. We discussed DOD's policy on child care and reviewed departmentwide guidance and standards addressing this issue. We also reviewed data on the characteristics of service members.

For each military service, we obtained and reviewed its child care guidance; we also interviewed program officials to determine how they (1) provide child care, (2) implement regulations and guidelines, (3) administer and operate programs, and (4) assess needs. We obtained

studies related to military child care and, where available, statistical data on programs and participants.

Because DOD child care is decentralized, we visited a judgmentally selected sample of four installations in the Washington, D.C., area[1] — one in each of the military services—to learn more about child care operations, services provided, needs assessments, and children waiting for care at child development centers. Although these four installations are not representative of all installations in CONUS, the information obtained illustrated similarities and differences in child care programs. At each of the installations, we interviewed commanders or their representatives, asking how they (1) view the importance of child care and (2) assess program needs. We also discussed operations and services provided with program personnel.

To obtain national data on military child care, we designed and distributed a questionnaire (see app. I) to all CONUS installations that were identified by the military services as operating child development centers. The questionnaire elicited information on child care capacity, attendance, and the number of children waiting for care at one point in time — February 9, 1988. We pretested our questionnaire at seven installations and, to obtain comments on the questionnaire, we met with officials in each military service. We sent the final version of the questionnaire to a universe of 231 installations—86 Air Force, 64 Army 14 Marine Corps, and 67 Navy. At the remaining 247 CONUS installations with military personnel, we did not obtain information on military child care services because no child development centers were reported. Therefore, at these installations, we do not know whether (1) any type of child care, including family day care homes, is operated; (2) parents have expressed interest in child development centers; or (3) assuming there is child care, the potential would exist for program growth. In commenting on the report, DOD stated that (1) these installations had lower numbers of military personnel, and (2) many of these installations did not have a large enough population to support a child care program. However, DOD stated that some installations do have family day care homes.

Of the 231 installations, 219 (95 percent) returned questionnaire forms (see app. II). The return rates were as follows: Air Force, 97 percent; Navy, 96; Marine Corps, 93; and Army, 92. One form was returned too

[1]The installations visited were Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland; Fort Belvoir, Virginia; Naval Air Station, Patuxent River, Maryland; and Marine Corps Combat Development Center, Quantico, Virginia.

late to be included in the analyses. Returned forms from 3 installations indicated no child development centers or family day care homes on February 9, 1988. Of the remaining 215 installations, 213 operated child development centers and 126 had family day care homes. Although 2 installations did not operate centers, they did have family day care homes, which we included in our study.

We also discussed military child care with parents that had children on waiting lists.[1] Using a standardized telephone survey guide that we developed, we called parents at four installations[2] to determine why they wanted military child care; what arrangements they made while waiting for military child care; and the problems, if any, they experienced because they could not receive this care. Although not representative of all parents with children waiting for care, the information provides insight into parents' situations. The size of the random sample of parents to be called at each installation varied according to the total number of children on the waiting list. At two of the installations, we randomly sampled about 20 percent of the parents with children on the list. At the third installation, we sampled about 10 percent; at the fourth installation, we sampled 50 percent of the parents. Our samples included parents with children from each of the following age categories: unborn children, newborns, infants, toddlers, and preschool age children. In total, we talked with 134 people at the four installations: 53 in Virginia; 48 in California; 21 in the Washington, D.C., area; and 12 in New York.

Our work was done from April 1987 to April 1988 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

[1] "Parent" is used throughout this report rather than "sponsor," which is often used by the military. A sponsor, when used in relation to military child care, denotes the person who has legal custody of the child and whose status determines the child's eligibility for care.

[2] The four installations were Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland; West Point, New York; Naval Amphibious Base, Little Creek, Virginia; and Marine Corps Air Station, El Toro, California.

Chapter 2

Why and How Does DOD Provide Child Care Services?

DOD provides child care services as a way of maintaining readiness,[1] reducing lost duty time, enhancing productivity, and improving the quality of life for service members and their families. DOD believes that (1) military families often face special problems and (2) private sector child care does not always meet the special needs of these families.

Each installation determines whether child care programs are needed, balancing that need with the need for other programs. With federally appropriated funds, the military subsidizes about one-third of the operating costs of child development centers and pays for their construction or renovation. The military funds the oversight costs for family day care homes; however, family day care homes are primarily supported by parent user fees, which are paid directly to caregivers.

DOD's Reasons for Providing Child Care

DOD provides a variety of MWR activities, including child care, to service members and their families. These activities are designed to improve the quality of life for service members, promoting and maintaining their mental and social well-being. DOD believes that these activities also enhance job proficiency, contribute to military effectiveness, and maintain readiness.

DOD considers child care to be an essential service because this care supports readiness by reducing duty time lost as a result of conflicts between parental responsibilities and unit mission requirements. Each military service supports this position. For example, one of the primary objectives of the Army child care program, according to its regulations, is reducing such conflict. For the Air Force, the child care program (1) contributes to the overall quality of family life and (2) enhances readiness because military families know that their children are well cared for, states Air Force policy. In addition, one of the primary objectives of the Marine Corps child care program is to improve job proficiency and contribute to military effectiveness. The Navy believes that military parents carry out their jobs more effectively knowing that their children are receiving quality care in the Navy program.

Although child care needs are a major issue for civilian and military families,[2] military families often face special problems. For example, because military families are required to move periodically, they usually

[1] "Readiness" is being prepared to deter war or, if necessary, to fight.

[2] See Child Care: Availability for Civilian Dependents at Selected DOD Installations (GAO/HRD-88-115, Sept. 15, 1988).

(1) cannot rely on extended family help in caring for their children and (2) do not have the support of an established neighborhood.

DOD has stated that child care in the private sector often does not meet the special needs of military families. In particular, DOD believes that private care is frequently inconveniently located or unavailable. For example, many child care providers in the private sector do not care for infants and toddlers; night and weekend care, needed by service members because of their unusual working hours, are often unavailable in the private sector. In addition, child care is often priced outside the budget of most military families. DOD has stated that military child care should (1) be offered at a cost lower than in the private sector and (2) provide service members with savings between 20 and 25 percent over comparable private sector care.

Although DOD is committed to providing child care, service members are ultimately responsible for the care of their own children. According to the military services' guidance for child care programs, care in military child development centers is offered as a supplement to, and not a substitute for, the family, which has the primary responsibility for a child's care and development.

How the Need for Child Care Is Determined

Although DOD is committed, in principle, to providing child care, each installation, in practice, determines the need for child care programs—whether they should be established and maintained. Before establishing and continuing any MWR activities (including child care) on an installation, the accessibility and capability of existing private sector (civilian) community MWR activities must be considered and reviewed. Every 3 years, installations must also (1) review and establish priorities for all MWR activities and (2) prepare annual and long-range programs. Those programs that require additional funds are to be evaluated and personnel resource needs (within personnel resource constraints) are to be identified.

Program requirements can vary by installation because of differences in installation missions. An installation that is frequently on alert or one that regularly participates in exercises may require a program that is different from those of other installations. In determining program requirements, personnel needs and interests must be identified by surveying the installation population and recording the use of existing programs. The ability to fund the development and operating costs of a program must also be identified and evaluated.

In addition, those installations located within 10 miles or 30 commuting minutes of an urban area in CONUS must conduct a survey of available private sector alternatives. Within this area, installations may also consider a program available on a nearby installation.

According to the four installation commanders (or their representatives), although they use various methods to identify interest in child development centers, they rely most heavily on the lists of children waiting for care, maintained by the centers. For example, all stated they have conducted interest surveys of personnel stationed at their installations, but the information obtained was not always reliable because of poor survey response rates or inaccurate accounting for current needs or potential use patterns. Waiting lists were more reliable or provided a clearer, more convenient method of assessing child care needs.

How Child Care Is Funded

MWR activities, including child care, receive funds from two sources: appropriated funds and nonappropriated funds. In fiscal year 1987, operating costs for child development centers worldwide were $134.3 million; the total operating costs for CONUS centers were not separately reported. The military met about one-third of the worldwide costs ($43.6 million) with federally appropriated funds. These funds can be used to meet centers' operating costs (such as utilities, supplies, and custodial and maintenance services) and some personnel costs (such as the salaries of directors and assistant directors). The oversight costs of family day care home programs can also be paid with appropriated funds. In addition, these funds are used for construction and renovation of child development centers.

All other operating costs are met with nonappropriated funds, most of which come from parent user fees (but we did not collect information on this). Current DOD data show, however, that the average weekly fees at child development centers range from $40 to $60 and are designed to be generally lower than those for comparable care in the private sector. Family day care homes are primarily supported by parent user fees, which are paid directly to the caregivers. The family day care home program incurs no construction costs because care is provided in the government-owned or government-leased housing of private individuals.

Child Care Services—Who Gets Them and What Are They?

Child development centers and family day care homes at CONUS installations, on February 9, 1988, had a combined capacity to serve about 62,000 children. Centers at 213 of the surveyed installations had the capacity to serve more than 38,000 children at the same time; about 4,600 family day care homes at 126 of the surveyed installations had the capacity to serve nearly 24,000 children. Less formalized care was also available through youth activity programs, chapels, parent cooperatives, and officers' wives' clubs.

Most installations responded that care was available at child development centers on a scheduled full-day or part-day basis or on an hourly basis for those needing care occasionally. Care was not, however, equally available to all age groups of children. In addition, at most installations, child care was not available in the centers on weekends, at night, for extended periods, or for children who were mildly ill or had special needs. These types of care were, however, usually available in family day care home programs. Full-day, part-day, and hourly care were available in a higher percentage of home programs for almost all age groups of children, but especially for the youngest children. In addition, three-quarters or more of the home programs offered weekend, night, or extended care; over 60 percent offered care for children who were mildly ill or had special needs.

Capacity of Child Development Centers in CONUS

At 213 of the CONUS installations surveyed, child development centers had the capacity to care for 38,505 children at the same time. The capacity of Air Force centers was the largest, with the ability to provide care for almost 3,000 more children than Army centers. The Air Force, however, operated centers at 26 more installations than the Army. The Navy operated centers at six more installations than the Army, but could care for about 4,000 fewer children. As would be expected, the capacity of Marine Corps centers was the smallest since it was also the smallest military service, with about 11 percent of all service members in CONUS. The Navy operated centers at almost five times as many installations as the Marine Corps, but the Navy could accommodate only two times as many children. The capacity of centers for each military service is shown in table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Capacity of CONUS Child Development Centers by Military Service

Military service	Installations	Children
Air Force	82	15,241
Army	56	12,299
Navy	62	7,912
Marine Corps	13	3,053
Total	**213**	**38,505**

For all the military services, the capacity of child development centers averaged 181 children, ranging from 20 at one Navy installation to 767 at one Marine Corps installation. Twenty percent of the installations had centers that could accommodate 51 to 100 children at the same time; about 13 percent could care for more than 300. (The center capacity for each military service's installations is shown in tables III.1 to III.5.)

Services Available in CONUS Child Development Centers

CONUS child development centers offered various services, primarily full-day, part-day, hourly, and preschool care. Full-day care is defined as regularly scheduled care of 5 or more hours each day. Part-day care varies among the military services, but is usually regularly scheduled care of (1) less than 6 hours daily or (2) 5 or more hours a day for 1 to 3 days a week. Part-day care includes before and after school, summer, and special programs, depending on installation needs. Hourly child care meets the needs of parents requiring short-term care on an occasional basis, usually from 1 to 5 hours. Preschool programs, usually 4 hours or less, may be conducted from 1 to 5 days a week for children 3 to 5 years old.

Full-day and hourly care were available at all or nearly all of the installations; about 83 percent offered part-day care. The percentage of installations offering full-day, part-day, and hourly care in centers by military service is shown in table III.6. However, as shown in table 3.2, newborns (those up to 5 months) had the least opportunity to receive full-day and hourly care; almost all installations offered these services to infants (6 to 17 months), toddlers (18 to 35 months), and preschool-age children (3 to 5 years). Across age groups, part-day care was less available than full-day and hourly care.

Table 3.2: CONUS Installations Offering Full-Day, Part-Day, and Hourly Care in Child Development Centers by Age Group

Age group	Installations						
	Total	Full day		Part day		Hourly	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Newborn	213	146	68	55	26	109	51
Infant	213	210	99	108	51	198	93
Toddler	213	211	99	114	54	200	94
Preschool age	213	211	99	168	79	203	95

Additional services, designed to meet the specific needs of service members, were available at some installations; for example, care on weekends, at night, for extended periods, and for children with special needs or mild illnesses. The percentage of installations in each military service at which these types of center care were available varied, but they were available most often at Air Force centers (see table 3.3). In commenting on this report, DOD said that all centers have the capability to provide 24-hour care when installation missions require them to do so.

Table 3.3: CONUS Installations in Each Military Service by Type of Child Care Offered in Child Development Centers

Figures in percent

Type of child care	Installations				
	All military services	Air Force	Army	Navy	Marine Corps
Weekend	42	67	23	24	46
Night	19	24	14	14	23
Extended 24-hour	4	10	2	0	0
Special needs	45	54	52	31	23
Mildly ill	8	17	2	5	0

(For each military service, the number of installations offering various types of child care in centers is shown in table III.7.)

Number of Children Attending CONUS Child Development Centers

A total of 39,263 children were to attend CONUS child development centers on February 9, 1988.[1] Because more than one child could use a part-day or hourly slot during a day, capacity would have been exceeded by 2 percent. Overall, 52 percent of the children were to attend for the full day; the remaining 48 percent were to attend for other than the full day (the percentages varied by military service), as shown in table 3.4.

[1]This total is the number who were expected, contracted, or signed up. Some will not attend every day for such reasons as illness and poor weather conditions.

Table 3.4: Children Who Were to Attend CONUS Full-Day Care and Other Day Care by Military Service (on Feb. 9, 1988)

	Children in day care				
		Full day		Other	
Military service	Total	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Air Force	14,583	7,077	48	7,506	52
Army	13,613	6,053	44	7,560	56
Navy	7,998	5,446	68	2,552	32
Marine Corps	3,069	2,038	66	1,031	34
Total	**39,263**	**20,614**	52	**18,649**	48

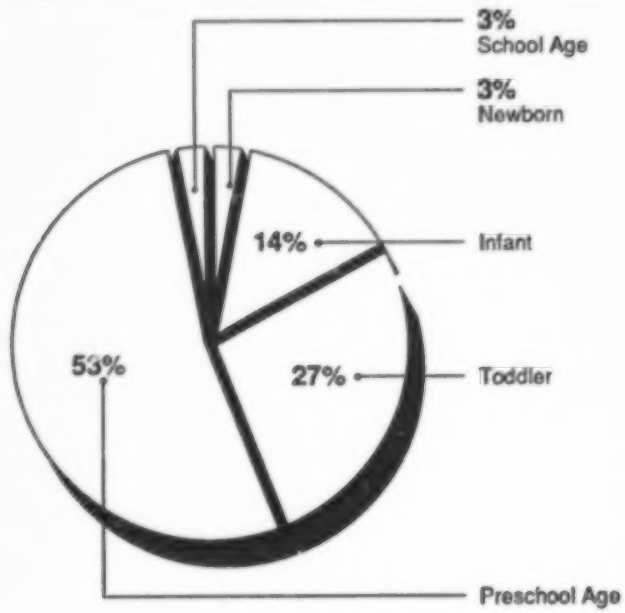
About 35,000 children attended child development centers. Of these, 52 percent attended for full-day care, and the remaining children attended for other than full-day care. (The number of children attending centers by military service is shown in table III.8.)

Characteristics of Children Who Were to Attend CONUS Full-Day Care in Child Development Centers

Each military service establishes the minimum and maximum ages of children eligible to attend its child development centers. However, within the framework of each military service's guidance, installation commanders have discretion in determining who can receive installation care. On some military installations, care in centers is provided to children as young as 4 weeks to as old as 12 years.[2] About 30 percent of the CONUS installations surveyed would not provide any type of care to children under 6 months, and about 50 percent did not serve those over 10 years old, even on an hourly basis. Of the 20,614 children who were to attend for the full day, about 53 percent were preschool age—3 to 5 years—and only 3 percent were newborns (see fig. 3.1). (For all military services and in each military service, the number of children, divided into age groups, who were to attend centers for a full day is shown in tables III.9 to III.13.)

[2]One installation indicated that care was provided to children as young as 3 weeks and as old as 13 years.

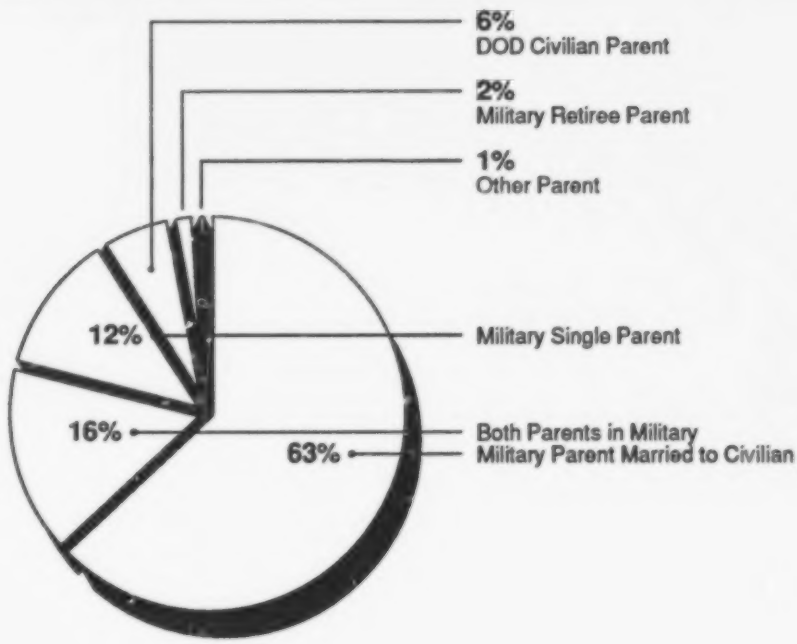
Figure 3.1: Children Who Were to Attend CONUS Centers for Full-Day Care by Age



(For all military services and for each military service, the age groups of children who were to attend CONUS centers for other than a full day are shown in tables III.14 to III.18.)

The parents of the children who were to attend CONUS centers for a full day in all military services were primarily service members, as shown in figure 3.2. Of the children who were to attend full-day care in each military service, 90 percent or more had at least one parent who was a service member. However, characteristics of the parents varied. For example, children with a military parent married to a civilian ranged from 59 percent in the Air Force to 70 percent in the Marine Corps; children with both parents in the military ranged from 13 percent in the Navy to 19 percent in the Air Force; and children with single parents were about the same in each military service—10 percent in the Marine Corps, 11 percent in the Navy, and 12 percent in the Air Force and in the Army. (The parent characteristics of children who were to attend CONUS centers for a full day in all military services and in each military service are shown in tables III.19 and III.20.)

Figure 3.2: Children Who Were to Attend CONUS Centers for Full-Day Care by Parent Characteristics



About 6 percent of the children who were to attend CONUS full-day care had DOD civilian parents. However, at 43 installations servicewide, children with DOD civilian parents accounted for more than 10 percent of those who were to attend full-day care. At three Army installations, over 50 percent of the children had DOD civilian parents. About 95 percent of the children who were to attend full-day care at one Navy installation had parents who were DOD civilians.

Capacity of Family Day Care Homes in CONUS

Of the installations surveyed, 126 operated family day care homes. All but 2 of the 126 installations also operated child development centers. About 71 percent of Air Force installations with child development centers also had family homes; about 88 percent of Army installations operated family homes.[1] The number of family homes was smaller in the Navy and the Marine Corps. Only 46 percent of Marine Corps installations with child development centers had family homes; only 19 percent

[1]One Army installation had family day care homes, but did not operate a child development center.

of Navy installations with centers had home programs.[1] The 4,557 family day care homes in all military services had the capacity to serve 23,719 children. However, total program capacity may be substantially larger because the 247 CONUS installations with military personnel not included in the survey may operate family day care homes, although these installations do not operate child development centers.

As shown in table 3.5, in our survey, the Army's family homes accounted for more than half of (1) all military services' family homes and (2) program capacity. Although the Air Force operated homes on eight more CONUS installations than the Army, the capacity of the Air Force family homes was the second largest. The Army was the only military service with the capacity for family homes being larger than that for centers.

Table 3.5: Surveyed CONUS Family Day Care Homes and Capacity by Military Service (on Feb. 9, 1988)

	Homes		Capacity	
Military service	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
Army	2,487	55	13,456	57
Air Force	1,659	36	7,925	33
Navy	264	6	1,486	6
Marine Corps	147	3	852	4
Total	**4,557**	**100**	**23,719**	**100**

(The ranges in the capacity of surveyed family homes are shown in table III.21.)

Services Available in CONUS Family Day Care Homes

The family day care homes on CONUS installations offered the same types of child care services as centers.[2] Full-day care was available in programs on all installations, with part-day and hourly care offered in almost all of the programs. These family homes offered about the same percentages of full-day and hourly care as centers. However, part-day care was available more often in family homes. CONUS installations offering full-day, part-day, and hourly care in family homes are shown by military service (see table III.22).

[1]One Navy installation had family day care homes, but did not operate a child development center.

[2]We determined only whether each type of service was available in the installations' family day care homes. We did not determine how many of the homes at each installation provided the services.

Family homes also offered full-day, part-day, and hourly care to children of different ages, but, in general, they offered more care to the youngest children than did the centers. Full-day care was available to newborns at 97 percent of the installations with family homes. In addition, newborns could receive part-day care at 85 percent of the installations with family homes. Infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children could receive part-day care on at least 91 percent of the installations with family homes. Hourly care in family homes was available for newborns at 88 percent of these installations and for other age groups of children at a minimum of 93 percent. (Surveyed CONUS installations with family homes offering child care by age groups are shown in table III.23.)

Child care was also available on weekends, at night, and for extended 24-hour periods in at least 75 percent of the installations' family home programs, which is more than in the centers. Servicewide, children with special needs and mild illnesses could receive care on at least 64 percent of the installations. As shown in table 3.6, the availability of such types of care varied within each military service.

Table 3.6: Surveyed CONUS Installations in Each Military Service by Type of Child Care Offered in Family Day Care Home Programs

Figures in percent

	Installations				
Type of child care	All military services	Air Force	Army	Navy	Marine Corps
Weekend	92	97	94	75	67
Night	92	97	90	92	67
Extended 24-hour	75	66	92	50	67
Special needs	64	66	72	33	33
Mildly ill	69	79	66	50	33

(The number of installations in each military service offering various types of child care in family homes is shown in table III.24.)

Services Available From Other Groups on CONUS Installations

In addition to centers and family day care homes, other groups provided child care services on CONUS installations. As shown in table 3.7, 197 of the 213 CONUS installations with centers also had youth activities programs. In the Army, for example, for children and youths from 6 to 19 years old, these activities promoted social interaction and developed educational and recreational skills. In the four military services, of the installations surveyed, at least 77 percent and as many as 100 percent had youth activities with recreation and development programs offering

structured child care programs for military families. Those without structured programs offered drop-in recreation as part of their overall programs. On 31 percent of the installations with centers, other groups—such as chapels, officers' wives' clubs, and parent cooperatives—also provided some type of child care.

Table 3.7: CONUS Installations With Youth Activities and Other Types of Child Care Programs by Military Service

	Installations			
	With youth activities programs		With other types of child care programs	
Military service	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Air Force	81	99	10	12
Army	56	100	35	62
Navy	50	81	14	23
Marine Corps	10	77	7	54
Total	**197**	92	**66**	31

Chapter 4

Growth in Child Care—Will It Continue?

Each year, an increasing number of children receive care on DOD's installations. The total number of children that could receive care at the same time on surveyed installations grew from an estimated 34,000 children at the end of fiscal year 1984 to about 62,000 on February 9, 1988, an 82-percent increase. During this period, the number of children that could be cared for increased by about 25 percent in child development centers and by over 600 percent in family day care homes.

Child development centers are designed to offer care at (1) a cost lower than in the private sector and (2) a convenient location; they provide services that may not be available in the private sector. Centers therefore are likely to continue to attract service members seeking care for their children. On February 9, 1988, the names of over 24,700 children were on waiting lists for center care.

Service members with children who must arrange for child care include those who are single and those married to other service members or working civilians. With close to 1 million children of service members worldwide who could potentially be in child care at some time, the demand for care will most likely continue.

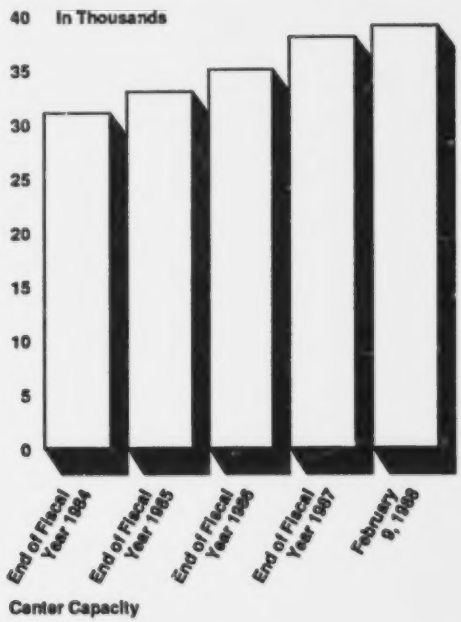
Future growth in child care depends on the extent to which the military attempts to provide child care to all service members who request it. In order for the child development centers to continue to expand, additional federal funding will be needed. For fiscal years 1985-87, federally supported operating costs grew by about 39 percent, with $91.0 million obligated for center construction projects. The potential for the growth of family day care homes, which cost less, exists as long as government-owned or government-leased housing is available, individuals want to provide the care, and funds are made available for oversight costs.

In response to interest in child care, many installations with child development centers have submitted requests to expand or renovate these centers or construct new centers. Other installations have expanded their family day care homes. At nearly half of the installations with children waiting for care, commanders have determined that categories of military families—such as single parents and those with both parents in the military—should have priority in receiving center care, given the fact that currently all military families cannot receive it.

Capacity of CONUS Child Development Centers Growing

The capacity of CONUS child development centers has grown since the end of fiscal year 1984. The number of children that could receive care at the same time increased by about 25 percent: from 30,751 at the end of fiscal year 1984 to 38,505 on February 9, 1988 (see fig. 4.1). (The increase for each military service is shown in table III.25.)

Figure 4.1: CONUS Child Development Center Capacity (End of Fiscal Year 1984 Through Feb. 9, 1988)



The operating costs of child development centers grew along with capacity. According to military service data, total operating costs for all centers, including those within and outside the United States, totaled $101.6 million in fiscal year 1985. Federal appropriations of $31.4 million met about 31 percent of the total. The remainder came from nonfederal sources, such as user fees paid by parents with children in the centers. By fiscal year 1987, operating costs increased to $134.3 million, about 32 percent more than in fiscal year 1985. The federally appropriated funds of $43.6 million reflect an increase of about 39 percent over the fiscal year 1985 federally appropriated funds.

Child development centers are also constructed, expanded, or renovated using federal funds. Of the installations we surveyed, 175 stated that they had submitted a request for federal funds to construct a new center or expand the existing one. Of the installation officials that submitted a request and knew its date, more than one-half submitted it in either 1986 or 1987. For fiscal years 1985-87, a total of $91.0 million was obligated for 55 construction projects. Of these, 25 projects, totaling $47.3 million, were for centers in CONUS. In commenting on this report, DOD stated that many of the centers built have been replacements, designed to eliminate health and safety deficiencies, and have not significantly increased overall center capacity.

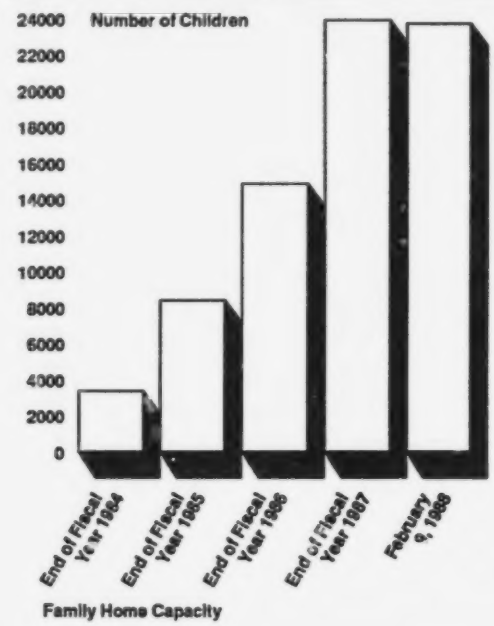
The need for increased center capacity should continue, given the following: Centers provide services that may not be available in the private sector; care is designed to be offered at a lower cost and a convenient location; and service members whose children are not accepted place their children's names on waiting lists. However, additional federal funding will be necessary for center capacity growth to continue.

Capacity of CONUS Family Day Care Homes Growing

During the last few years, family day care homes have experienced tremendous growth at CONUS installations reported to have child development centers. From the end of fiscal year 1984 to February 9, 1988, the capacity of family homes increased by over 600 percent. Because we did not obtain information from installations without centers, however, this growth could have been larger or smaller.[1] At the end of fiscal year 1984, the four military services operated at least 764 family homes that could care for 3,363 children at the same time. On February 9, 1988, 4,557 family homes were operating, almost five times more than in 1984; the total number of children that could be cared for at the same time grew, by more than six times, to 23,719. From the end of fiscal year 1984 through February 9, 1988, the capacity of family homes (at installations reported to have child development centers) grew (see fig. 4.2). Although the capacity of family homes has continued to grow, the rate of growth has been decreasing. In fiscal year 1985, growth was 150 percent; in 1986, 77 percent; and in 1987, 61 percent. (The growth in surveyed family homes from the end of fiscal year 1984 through February 9, 1988, for each military service, is shown in table III.26.)

[1]Two installations that were identified by the military services as operating centers indicated they did not operate centers. These installations did have family day care homes, which we included in our study.

Figure 4.2: Growth in Family Day Care Home Program Capacity (End of Fiscal Year 1984 Through Feb 9, 1988)



At the installations surveyed, although family homes were still smaller than centers in terms of total capacity, the potential for continued growth exists. Growth would depend on the availability of government housing units, the willingness of individuals to provide the care, an installation's commitment to the program, and an installation's ability to oversee and monitor it. Growth could take place without a significant commitment of federal resources for constructing facilities or meeting operating costs.

Demographic Data Show a Large Eligible Population

Demographic data show that child care will most likely continue to be an important issue in the military for years to come. According to survey data collected in 1985 by DOD's Defense Manpower Data Center, about 60 percent of enlisted personnel in all military services were married. About 43 percent were married and had children; about 3 percent were single parents. About 75 percent of officers were married, with spouses and children in 60 percent of these officers' households, and about 2 percent of these officers were single parents.

Service members (including those who are single, those married to another service member, and those married to a working civilian) with young children must use military child care or private sector care. The number of these service members was most recently estimated for 1985 by DOD's Defense Manpower Data Center. Worldwide, there were service members with children 12 years old or younger who accompanied the members on their tours of duty as follows: about 31,100 were single; about 41,200 were married to service members; and 217,600 were married to working civilians. These survey data also estimate that in 1985, all service members, including those with nonworking civilian spouses, had about 978,200 children under the age of 13 living with them. These children are eligible for child care and could potentially receive it at some time.

Parents Prefer Military Child Care

Parents cited several reasons for preferring military to private sector child care. We interviewed 134 parents whose children's names were on the waiting lists of child development centers at four military installations. About 58 percent of the 134 parents wanted military care because of its location; about 56 percent wanted it because of its lower cost; about 42 percent also indicated that they believed its quality was better than that of nonmilitary care.

According to about 55 percent of the parents we interviewed, they experienced problems because their children could not receive care in centers. For example, for about 24 percent, being without military child care at some time (1) prevented them or their spouses from arriving at work when planned or (2) caused them or their spouses to miss work entirely; for about 28 percent, economic hardship was experienced because of the unavailability of military child care; for about 24 percent, their own or their spouses' productivity was affected, they believed. About 11 percent had placed their children in child development centers by the time we interviewed them. All of the remaining parents on the list, except those with unborn children, had made other child care arrangements.

Children on Waiting Lists for CONUS Child Development Centers

In our review, at the 213 CONUS installations with child development centers, 185 (87 percent) maintained waiting lists with the names of 24,729 children. About 80 percent of these children were waiting for full-day care; the remainder were waiting for other types of care. (The number of children waiting for centers, by military service, is shown in table III.27.) We did not determine how many parents would be interested in

center care at the 247 installations with military personnel that did not operate centers at the time of our survey.

Children up to the age of 12 were on waiting lists. As shown in table 4.1, about 4 percent of the children were listed even though unborn, reflecting some parents' attempts to arrange care for children as early as possible. Many preschool-age children were listed (44 percent were between 3 and 5 years old).

Table 4.1: Children Waiting for CONUS Child Development Center Care by Age Group (on Feb. 9, 1988)

	Children		
Age group	**Number**	**Percent**	**Cumulative percent**
Prebirth (unborn)	1,097	4	4
Birth to 5 months	1,502	6	10
6 to 12 months	2,242	9	19
13 to 17 months	1,832	7	26
18 to 23 months	2,285	9	35
2 years	3,768	15	50
3 years	5,013	20	70
4 years	4,343	18	88
5 years	1,530	6	94
Other	1,076	4	98[a]
Total	**24,688[b]**	**98[a]**	

[a]Percentages do not add to 100 because of rounding.

[b]Does not include one Air Force installation with 41 children waiting for all types of military child care because the children were not identified by age groups.

The number of children on waiting lists varied at each installation, with no lists at 28 installations. At the remaining 185 installations, the number of children waiting was as high as 1,568 (at one installation). About 36 percent had between 1 and 50 children's names on their waiting lists; 33 percent, from 51 to 150 names; and about 5 percent, more than 400 names. (The number of children at CONUS installations waiting for care is shown in tables III.28 to III.32 for all military services and in each military service.)

The number of children's names indicates parents' interest in military child care and the potential for program growth. However, there are some qualifications concerning the numbers. They may be overstated if they are not regularly updated. In our review, at 96 percent of the installations with waiting lists, personnel indicated that they regularly

update the lists. But the lists may be understated because some installations restrict the number of children's names on waiting lists; we found, however, that only four installations set limits. A waiting list may (1) overstate interest when it includes parents that place a child's name on more than one waiting list and (2) understate interest when it does not include the names of children whose parents were discouraged by the length of the wait. We were unable to determine how many parents were on more than one list or how often parents were discouraged by the length of the wait and decided not to list a child. There are problems associated with using waiting lists to determine interest in child care. Excluding the unborn, lists are, however, useful as gross approximations of the potential for program growth; that is, lists show the demand for space at the time parents first placed a child's name on the waiting list.

Parents made a variety of other care arrangements while waiting to place children in child development centers. At four installations where we interviewed parents, of the 134 parents with children on waiting lists, 57 no longer wanted center care, and 15 had children in a child development center by the time we talked to them. Of the remaining 77 parents that still wanted center care, 31 percent stated that they had private baby-sitters taking care of their children in the baby-sitters' homes, and about 27 percent said that one of two parents stayed at home to care for the child (or children). However, some of these parents said that they used more than one type of child care. For example, one parent had a private baby-sitter taking care of the child in the baby-sitter's home, but also used hourly drop-in care at the center when possible. Another parent stayed at home, but also had a baby-sitter come to the home when needed.

The other parents reported using child care arrangements that included family day care homes, hourly care in the centers, and a staggered work schedule so that one parent could be at home to care for the child while the other one worked. Only 5 percent had placed their children in child care centers run by the private sector.

How Children Are Selected for CONUS Child Development Centers

Of the 213 CONUS installations with child development centers in our review, about 87 percent had waiting lists. At 53 percent of the installations, when a vacancy occurred, children were selected from lists on a first-come, first-served basis. The other installations, generally, had set selection priorities based on family characteristics.

DOD Instruction No. 1015.2 (May 17, 1985) indicates 15 categories of individuals eligible to participate in MWR activities, including centers. At a given installation, first priority goes to service members and their families assigned to that installation.

Of the installations, 53 percent took first come, first served within this first priority category; 47 percent have also established priorities within this first priority category, usually giving the top priority to those groups of eligible parents for whom in-home parental care was not an option for the family; about 50 percent of the installations with priorities within the first priority category gave children of single parents the top priority. When children of single parents were not given the top priority for center care, they were usually considered in the next four groups; children with both parents in the military were considered in the five highest groups at 53 percent of these installations and were usually given the next-to-top priority for child care. At 13 installations, children with single parents and both parents in the military were considered equally.

Matters for Congressional Consideration

The large number of requests for child development center care means that long-range decisions are facing the military—as to who should receive this care—and the Congress—as to how much support the program will receive through appropriated dollars. As interest in the program grows, the Congress and the military will need to consider whether center care should be made available for all military parents who want this care or whether program eligibility for military parents should be limited. These decisions would involve balancing the cost of program expansion and operation against DOD's stated benefits of maintaining readiness, increasing productivity, and improving morale. In the interim, however, when center capacity is not adequate, installations may need to continue to expand the family day care home program.

Agency Comments

DOD, in a December 22, 1988, letter (see app. IV) commenting on a draft of this report, concurred with our review results. DOD stated, however, the importance of clarifying that our data represent military child care

programs at CONUS installations only and not at DOD installations worldwide. Our draft report explained the distinction involving CONUS installations; however, we have added language to emphasize that only these installations and related data were included in our review.

DOD also stated that we should clarify that the CONUS installations we did not survey—those without child development centers—are smaller installations and many are predominantly staffed with civilians. We incorporated this statement into the report.

Although DOD supports the continued expansion of the family day care home program, as we suggested, DOD stated that the current demand for military child care requires the development of all types of care. DOD noted that there are limits to expanding the family day care home program and, therefore, it will continue to upgrade, replace, and expand child development centers.

DOD also provided suggested technical changes throughout the report, which we incorporated where appropriate.

Military Child Care Program Questionnaire

UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE

STUDY OF MILITARY CHILD CARE

The United States General Accounting Office (GAO) is conducting a study, at the request of Congress, of child care provided at Department of Defense installations in the continental United States. As part of this study, we are sending this questionnaire to military installations identified by the Air Force, Army, Navy, and Marine Corps as operating child development centers.

(LABEL HERE)

This questionnaire is to be completed by the person(s) most familiar with various aspects of your child development program. Because of the variety of information requested, you may want to briefly review the questionnaire to determine the sources of information and people needed to complete it before you begin.

Please provide the name, title, and telephone number of the primary person responsible for completing the questionnaire in the event that further information is required concerning the responses.

Name of primary contact person: _____

Official title: _____

Telephone number: (___) _____

In order to comply with Congress' request in a timely manner, we ask that you return your completed questionnaire as soon as possible. Please return the questionnaire in the enclosed, business reply envelope, or if the envelope is misplaced, send it to the address shown on the last page of the questionnaire. If you have any questions, please call Sherri Doughty at (202) 523-9131.

Thank you for your cooperation.

INTRODUCTION

Before we ask questions about child care, we'd like some information about the personnel assigned to your installation. Currently, what is the approximate total number of (1) officers, (2) enlisted members, and (3) DOD civilian personnel assigned or stationed at your installation? Your answers can be your best estimates.

1. _____ Total number of officers
2. _____ Total number of enlisted members
3. _____ Total number of DOD civilian personnel

SECTION I: FAMILY DAY CARE HOMES

1. Is a family day care home program (i.e. a program providing child care at an authorized or certified person's home or quarters for the children of one or more families) operated by your installation? (CHECK ONE.)

   1. ___ Yes (NEXT)
   2. ___ No (GO TO QUESTION 5)

2. For **February 9, 1988**, indicate the (1) total number of authorized/certified **family day care homes** operated by your installation and (2) maximum number of children that could be cared for at one time in **all family day care homes** operated by your installation (capacity).

   1. _____ Total number of authorized/certified homes
   2. _____ Maximum number of children that could be cared for at any one time (capacity) in all homes

3. We are interested in the types of care that are available through the **family day care home** program. For each type of care listed below, check the different types of care that are available in your family day care home(s). (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.)

Full day care (i.e. Defined by your service branch)

1. ___ Newborn (Up to 5 months)
2. ___ Infant (6 - 17 months)
3. ___ Toddler (18 - 35 months)
4. ___ Preschool age (3 - 5 years)
5. ___ Other (Specify) _____

Part day care (i.e. Defined by your service branch)

1. ___ Newborn (Up to 5 months)
2. ___ Infant (6 - 17 months)
3. ___ Toddler (18 - 35 months)
4. ___ Preschool age (3 - 5 years)
5. ___ School age (6 - 12 years)
6. ___ Other (Specify) _____

Hourly care (Child care arranged by appointment)

1. ___ Newborn (Up to 5 months)
2. ___ Infant (6 - 17 months)
3. ___ Toddler (18 - 35 months)
4. ___ Preschool age (3 - 5 years)
5. ___ School age (6 - 12 years)
6. ___ Other (Specify) _____ _____

Special needs

1. ___ Specify _____

Other types of care

1. ___ 24-hour extended care
2. ___ Weekend care
3. ___ Night care (e.g. swing shift, midnight shift, etc.)
4. ___ Mildly ill
5. ___ Other (Specify) _____

3

4. As of the end of each federal fiscal year (FY) listed below, please indicate in:

Column 1: Total number of authorized/certified family day care home(s) operated by your installation. If you did not operate any homes during a fiscal year, put **"0"** in column 1. If the information is not available or is unknown, please enter **N/A** in the appropriate column.

Column 2: Maximum number of children that could be cared for at one time in all family day care home(s) operated by your installation (capacity). If the information is not available or is unknown, please enter **N/A** in the appropriate column.

As of the End of	Column 1 Total Number of Homes	Column 2 Total Children That Could be Cared for at One Time (Capacity)
FY 1984		
FY 1985		
FY 1986		
FY 1987		

SECTION II: CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

In the following sections, the term child development center means the same as child care center.

5. Does your installation have a child development center(s)? (CHECK ONE.)

1. ___ Yes (NEXT)
2. ___ No (GO TO QUESTION 28)

6. We are interested in the types of care that are available at your child development center(s). For each type of care listed below, check the different types of care that are available at your center(s). (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.)

Full day care (i.e. Defined by your service branch)

1. ___ Newborn (up to 5 months)
2. ___ Infant (6 - 17 months)
3. ___ Toddler (18 - 35 months)
4. ___ Preschool age (3 - 5 years)
5. ___ Other (Specify) _____

Part day care (i.e. Defined by your service branch)

1. ___ Newborn (up to 5 months)
2. ___ Infant (6 - 17 months)
3. ___ Toddler (18 - 35 months)
4. ___ Preschool age (3 - 5 years)
5. ___ School age (6 - 12 years)
6. ___ Other (Specify) _____

Hourly care (Child care arranged by appointment)

1. ___ Newborn (up to 5 months)
2. ___ Infant (6 - 17 months)
3. ___ Toddler (18 - 35 months)
4. ___ Preschool age (3 - 5 years)
5. ___ School age (6 - 12 years)
6. ___ Other (Specify) _____

Special needs

1. ___ Specify _____

Other types of care

1. ___ 24-hour extended care
2. ___ weekend care
3. ___ Night care (e.g. swing shift, midnight shift, etc.)
4. ___ Mildly ill
5. ___ Other (Specify) _____

5

7. For **February 9, 1988**, indicate the:

   (1) Maximum number of children that could be cared for at one time in the center(s) (capacity).

   (2) Total number of children who are actually **expected, contracted, or signed up** for full day and other care, but may or may not be in attendance on this day.

   (3) Total number of children **in attendance** for full day and other care on this day.

(1)	Total center(s) capacity	_____
(2)	Total children expected, contracted, or signed up for care	
	Full day	_____
	Other	_____
(3)	Total children in attendance	
	Full day	_____
	Other	_____

8. In general, what is the (1) minimum age in weeks (IF MINIMUM AGE IS IN MONTHS OR YEARS, PLEASE CONVERT THE AGE TO WEEKS) and (2) maximum age in years children can receive some type of child care provided by your center(s)?

   1. Minimum age _____ (Weeks)
   2. Maximum age _____ (Years)

6

9. For **February 9, 1988**, indicate for each age group:

Column 1: Total number of children who are actually **expected, contracted, or signed up** for full day and other care, but may or may not be in attendance on this day.

Column 2: Total number of children **in attendance** for full day and other care on this day for the following age groups.

Age Groups	Column 1		Column 2	
	Total Number of Children Expected, Contracted, or Signed Up		Total Number of Children in Attendance	
	Full Day	Other	Full Day	Other
1. Newborn (Up to 5 months)				
2. Infant (6 - 17 months)				
3. Toddler (18 - 35 months)				
4. Preschool age (3 - 5 years)				
5. School age (6 - 12 years)				

7

10. We are interested in some characteristics of the families of children who are being served in your **child development center(s)**. For the following groups, how many children are actually **expected, contracted, or signed up for full day care** at your center(s) for **February 9, 1988**? If you did not serve any children from the following groups, put **"0"** in the appropriate column. If the information is not available or is unknown, please enter **N/A**.

Characteristics		Total Number of Children
(1) Active duty parent/sponsor		
Single	(Divorced, widowed, or unmarried)	_____
Dual military	(Both parents active duty)	_____
Married	(One active duty parent and one civilian parent)	_____
(2) Military retiree parent/sponsor		_____
(3) DOD civilian parent/sponsor		_____
(4) Other (Specify)		
_____		_____

11. As of the end of each federal fiscal year (FY) listed below, please indicate the maximum number of children that could be cared for at one time (capacity) in the child development center(s) operated by your installation.

As of the End of	Total Children That Could be Cared for at One Time (Capacity)
1. FY 1984	
2. FY 1985	
3. FY 1986	
4. FY 1987	

8

12. Consider programs that provide child care on your installation. Is there a Youth Activities program operating on or associated with your installation? (CHECK ONE.)

    1. ___ Yes (NEXT)

    2. ___ No (GO TO QUESTION 15)

13. Is the Youth Activities program operated by the child development center or another entity? (CHECK ONE.)

    1. ___ Operated by the child development center (NEXT)

    2. ___ Operated by another entity (GO TO QUESTION 15)

14. In general, what is the (1) minimum age and (2) maximum age children can receive some type of child care provided by the Youth Activities program?

    1. Minimum age _____ (Years)

    2. Maximum age _____ (Years)

15. Are there any other groups or organizations located on the installation which provide child care services? If yes, please identify the organizations. (CHECK ONE.)

    1. ___ No

    2. ___ Yes (Please identify the groups or organizations.)

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

9

SECTION III: Waiting List For Child Development Center(s)

16. Is a waiting list maintained for your child development center(s)? (CHECK ONE.)

1. ___ Yes (NEXT)
2. ___ No (GO TO QUESTION 28)

17. Is there a limit on the number of children who can be placed on the waiting list at any one time? (CHECK ONE.)

1. ___ Yes (NEXT)
2. ___ No (GO TO QUESTION 19)

18. What is the limit on the number of children who can be placed on the waiting list at any one time?

_____ Number of children

19. Do you on a routinely or on a regular basis update the center(s)' waiting list? (CHECK ONE.)

1. ___ Yes (NEXT)
2. ___ No (GO TO QUESTION 23)

13

20. For the children on the waiting list, what is the **primary** means for updating the waiting list? Do you routinely or on a regular basis contact the parent/sponsor to see if they still want child care, or do you **require** the parent/sponsor to contact the center to indicate that they still want care at the child development center? (CHECK ONE.)

1. ___ We routinely contact the parent/sponsor
2. ___ We require the parent/sponsor to contact us

(NEXT)

3. ___ Neither contact the parent nor require the parent to contact the center (GO TO QUESTION 22)
4. ___ Don't know (GO TO QUESTION 24)

21. How often is the contact made to determine if child care is still wanted at your child development center(s)? (CHECK ONE.)

1. ___ Weekly
2. ___ Monthly
3. ___ Quarterly (Every 3 months)
4. ___ Yearly
5. ___ Other (Specify)

_____

****
* *
* GO TO QUESTION 24 *
* *
****

22. Please describe the procedure(s) you follow in updating the center(s)' waiting list.

****
*
* GO TO QUESTION 24
*
****

23. What is the **primary** reason why your center(s) does not update the waiting list? (CHECK ONE.)

1. ___ Lack of staff
2. ___ Believe most people still want care
3. ___ Takes too much time
4. ___ Updating not required
5. ___ Other (Specify)

_____

24. On **February 9, 1988**, how many children in each of the age groups listed below were on your center(s)' **waiting list**? If you do not have children in an age group(s) on your waiting list, put **"0"** in the appropriate column. If the information is not available or is unknown, please enter **N/A in the appropriate column.**

1. **Full day care** (i.e. Defined by your service branch)

Age Groups	Total Number Children	Age Groups	Total Number Children
A. Prebirth (Unborn)	_____	F. 2 years old	_____
B. Birth to 5 months old	_____	G. 3 years old	_____
C. 6 - 12 months old	_____	H. 4 years old	_____
D. 13 - 17 months old	_____	I. 5 years old	_____
E. 18 - 23 months old	_____	J. Other (Specify) _____	_____

2. **Part day care** (i.e. Defined by your service branch)

Age Groups	Total Number Children	Age Groups	Total Number Children
A. Prebirth (Unborn)	_____	F. 2 years old	_____
B. Birth to 5 months old	_____	G. 3 years old	_____
C. 6 - 12 months old	_____	H. 4 years old	_____
D. 13 - 17 months old	_____	I. 5 years old	_____
E. 18 - 23 months old	_____	J. 6 - 12 years old	_____
		K. Other (Specify) _____	_____

3. **Preschool program**

Age Groups	Total Number Children
A. 3 years old	_____
B. 4 years old	_____
C. 5 years old	_____

4. **Other** (Specify) _____

13

25. In your opinion which one age group has to wait the longest to get **full day care** at your center(s). (CHECK ONE.)

1. ___ Birth to 5 months old
2. ___ 6 - 12 months old
3. ___ 13 - 17 months old
4. ___ 18 - 23 months old
5. ___ 2 years old
6. ___ 3 years old
7. ___ 4 years old
8. ___ 5 years old
9. ___ Other
10. ___ Don't know/can't judge

26. When using the waiting list to fill vacancies in the child development center, are children selected on a first come first serve basis? (CHECK ONE.)

1. ___ Yes (GO TO QUESTION 28)
2. ___ No (NEXT)

27. When you have a vacancy in your child development center and you fill the vacancy from a waiting list, in general, what characteristics of children or families (e.g. age, marital and military status, etc.), if any, do you take into consideration when deciding which child should get care? Please describe.

SECTION IV: EXPANSION ACTIVITIES

28. Since FY 1980, has your installation submitted a request(s) (i.e. form 1391) for new military construction of a child development center(s) or expansion of the existing center(s) that would result or has resulted in an increase in the total number of children being served? (CHECK ONE.)

1. ___ Yes (NEXT)
2. ___ No (GO TO QUESTION 30)

29. When was the latest request submitted?

_____ (Year)

30. Since FY 1980, have you used funds other than Military Construction Act funds (e.g. nonappropriated funds, minor construction funds, etc.) to construct, expand, procure, or renovate a child development center(s) that would result or has resulted in an increase in the total number of children being served? (CHECK ONE.)

1. ___ Yes (NEXT)
2. ___ No (GO TO QUESTION 32)

31. Please identify these other sources of funds.

32. If you have any additional comments about your family day care homes or child development center(s) or any other matters related to the issue of child care, please write them in the space below.

16

Please return to:

U.S. General Accounting Office
441 G Street N.W.
Room 6858 - HRD
Washington, D.C. 20548
Attn: Sherri Doughty

17

219 CONUS Installations Participating in GAO's Survey of Military Child Care by Location

Air Force CONUS Installations

Alabama Air Force Bases	Gunter[1] Maxwell
Arizona Air Force Bases	Davis-Monthan Luke Williams
Arkansas Air Force Bases	Eaker Little Rock
California Air Force Bases	Beale Castle Edwards George Los Angeles[1] March Mather McClellan Norton Travis Vandenberg
Colorado Air Force Bases	Lowry Peterson U.S. Air Force Academy
Delaware Air Force Base	Dover

[1]This installation is an Air Force Station.

District of Columbia Air Force Base	Bolling
Florida Air Force Bases	Eglin Homestead Hurlburt Field MacDill Patrick Tyndall
Georgia Air Force Bases	Moody Robins
Idaho Air Force Base	Mountain Home
Illinois Air Force Bases	Chanute Scott
Indiana Air Force Base	Grissom
Kansas Air Force Base	McConnell
Louisiana Air Force Bases	Barksdale England
Maine Air Force Base	Loring
Maryland Air Force Base	Andrews
Michigan Air Force Bases	K. I. Sawyer Wurtsmith

Mississippi Air Force Bases	Columbus Keesler
Missouri Air Force Base	Whiteman
Montana Air Force Base	Malmstrom
Nebraska Air Force Base	Offutt
Nevada Air Force Bases	Indian Springs Air Force Auxiliary Field[1] Nellis
New Hampshire Air Force Base	Pease
New Jersey Air Force Base	McGuire
New Mexico Air Force Bases	Cannon Holloman Kirtland
New York Air Force Bases	Griffiss Plattsburgh
North Carolina Air Force Bases	Pope Seymour-Johnson

[1]Although initially identified by the Air Force as operating a child development center, this installation reported that it did not operate a center or have a family day care home program on February 9, 1988.

North Dakota Air Force Bases	Grand Forks Minot
Ohio Air Force Base	Wright-Patterson
Oklahoma Air Force Bases	Altus Tinker Vance
South Carolina Air Force Bases	Charleston Myrtle Beach Shaw
South Dakota Air Force Base	Ellsworth
Texas Air Force Bases	Bergstrom Brooks Carswell Dyess Goodfellow Kelly Lackland Laughlin Randolph Sheppard
Utah Air Force Base	Hill
Virginia Air Force Base	Langley

Washington Air Force Bases	Fairchild McChord
Wyoming Air Force Base	F. E. Warren

Army CONUS Installations

Alabama	Fort McClellan Fort Rucker Redstone Arsenal
Arizona	Fort Huachuca Yuma Proving Ground
California	Fort Irwin Fort Ord Oakland Army Base Presidio of San Francisco Sharpe Army Depot Sierra Army Depot
Colorado	Fitzsimmons Army Medical Center Fort Carson
Georgia	Fort Benning Fort Gordon Fort McPherson Fort Stewart
Illinois	AVSCOM Fort Sheridan Rock Island Arsenal

Indiana	Fort Benjamin Harrison
Kansas	Fort Leavenworth Fort Riley
Kentucky	Fort Campbell Fort Knox
Louisiana	Fort Polk
Maryland	Aberdeen Proving Ground Fort Detrick Fort George G. Meade Fort Ritchie
Massachusetts	Fort Devens
Michigan	Selfridge ANG Base
Missouri	Fort Leonard Wood
New Jersey	Fort Dix Fort Monmouth Mil Ocean Terminal, Bayonne Picatinny Arsenal
New Mexico	White Sands Missile Range

New York	Fort Drum Fort Hamilton West Point[1]
North Carolina	Fort Bragg
Oklahoma	Fort Sill
Pennsylvania	Carlisle Barracks Letterkenny Army Depot New Cumberland Army Depot
South Carolina	Fort Jackson
Texas	Fort Bliss Fort Hood Fort Sam Houston
Virginia	Fort Belvoir Fort Eustis Fort Lee Fort Monroe Fort Myer Fort Story U.S. Army Garrison
Washington	Fort Lewis
Wisconsin	Fort McCoy[1]

[1]This questionnaire was received too late to be included in the analyses.

[1]Although initially identified by the Army as operating a child development center, this installation reported that it did not operate a center or have a family day care home program on February 9, 1988.

Navy CONUS Installations

California	Naval Air Station (Alameda) Naval Weapons Center (China Lake) Naval Air Facility (El Centro) Naval Air Station (Lemoore) Naval Station (Long Beach) Naval Air Station (Moffet Field) Naval Post Graduate School (Monterey) Naval Air Station (Point Mugu) Naval Construction Battalion Center (Port Hueneme) Naval Administrative Command, Naval Training Center (San Diego) Naval Air Station, Miramar (San Diego) Naval Air Station, North Island (San Diego) Naval Amphibious Base, Coronado (San Diego) Naval Station (San Diego) Naval Station, Treasure Island (San Francisco) Naval Station, Mare Island (Vallejo)
Connecticut	Naval Submarine Base, New London (Groton)
Florida	Naval Air Station (Cecil Field) Naval Air Station (Jacksonville) Naval Station (Mayport) Naval Training Center (Orlando) Naval Air Station (Pensacola)
Georgia	Naval Supply Corps (Athens) Naval Submarine Base (Kings Bay) Naval Air Station, Atlanta (Marietta)
Illinois	Naval Air Station (Glenview) Naval Training Station (Great Lakes)

Louisiana	Naval Air Station (New Orleans) Naval Support Activity (New Orleans)
Maine	Naval Air Station (Brunswick)
Maryland	Naval Station (Annapolis) Naval Medical Command, National Capital Region (Bethesda) Naval Ordnance Station (Indian Head) Naval Air Station (Patuxent River)
Massachusetts	Naval Air Station (South Weymouth)
Mississippi	Naval Construction Battalion Center (Gulfport) Naval Air Station (Meridian)
Nevada	Naval Air Station (Fallon)
New Hampshire	Portsmouth Naval Shipyard (Portsmouth)
New Jersey	Naval Weapons Station, Earle (Colts Neck)[1] Naval Air Engineering Center (Lakehurst)
New York	Naval Station, New York (Brooklyn)
Pennsylvania	Navy Ships Parts Control Center (Mechanicsburg) Naval Station (Philadelphia) Naval Air Station (Willow Grove)

[1] Although initially identified by the Navy as operating a child development center, this installation reported that it did not operate a center or have a family day care home program on February 9, 1988.

Rhode Island	Naval Education & Training Center (Newport)
South Carolina	Naval Station, Naval Base (Charleston) Naval Weapons Station (Charleston)
Tennessee	Naval Air Station, Memphis (Millington)
Texas	Naval Air Station, Chase Field (Beeville) Naval Air Station (Corpus Christi) Naval Air Station (Dallas) Naval Air Station (Kingsville)
Virginia	Naval Security Group Activity Northwest (Chesapeake) Naval Surface Warfare Center (Dahlgren) Armed Forces Staff College (Norfolk) Naval Amphibious Base, Little Creek (Norfolk) Naval Station (Norfolk) Norfolk Naval Shipyard (Portsmouth) Naval Air Station, Oceana (Virginia Beach) Naval Weapons Station (Yorktown)
Washington	Naval Submarine Base, Bangor (Bremerton) Puget Sound Naval Shipyard (Bremerton) Naval Air Station, Whidbey Island (Oak Harbor)

Marine Corps CONUS Installations

Arizona	Marine Corps Air Station (Yuma)
California	Marine Corps Logistics Base (Barstow) Marine Corps Base (Camp Pendleton) Marine Corps Recruit Depot/WRR (San Diego)

	Marine Corps Air Station, El Toro (Santa Ana) Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center (Twentynine Palms)
Georgia	Marine Corps Logistics Base (Albany)
North Carolina	Marine Corps Base (Camp Lejeune) Marine Corps Air Station (Cherry Point) Marine Corps Air Station, New River (Jacksonville)
South Carolina	Marine Corps Air Station (Beaufort) Marine Corps Recruit Depot/ERR (Parris Island)
Virginia	Marine Corps Combat Development Center (Quantico)

Supplemental Data on Military Child Care Program

Table III.1: CONUS Installations by Capacity of Child Development Centers—All Military Services (on Feb. 9, 1988)

	Installations		
Center capacity	**Number**	**Percent**	**Cumulative percent**
1 to 50	17	8	8
51 to 100	43	20	28
101 to 150	41	19	47
151 to 200	41	19	66
201 to 250	25	12	78
251 to 300	19	9	87
More than 300	27	13	100
Total	**213**	**100**	

Table III.2: CONUS Installations by Capacity of Child Development Centers—Air Force (on Feb. 9, 1988)

	Installations		
Center capacity	**Number**	**Percent**	**Cumulative percent**
1 to 50	0	0	0
51 to 100	9	11	11
101 to 150	23	28	39
151 to 200	27	33	72
201 to 250	10	12	84
251 to 300	7	8	92
More than 300	6	7	99[a]
Total	**82**	**99[a]**	

[a]Percentages do not add to 100 because of rounding.

Table III.3: CONUS Installations by Capacity of Child Development Centers—Army (on Feb. 9, 1988)

	Installations		
Center capacity	**Number**	**Percent**	**Cumulative percent**
1 to 50	5	9	9
51 to 100	12	21	30
101 to 150	8	14	44
151 to 200	0	0	44
201 to 250	9	16	60
251 to 300	6	11	71
More than 300	16	29	100
Total	**56**	**100**	

Table III.4: CONUS Installations by Capacity of Child Development Centers—Navy (on Feb. 9, 1988)

	Installations		
Center capacity	**Number**	**Percent**	**Cumulative percent**
1 to 50	12	19	19
51 to 100	21	34	53
101 to 150	4	6	59
151 to 200	13	21	80
201 to 250	4	6	86
251 to 300	6	10	96
More than 300	2	3	99[a]
Total	**62**	**99[a]**	

[a]Percentages do not add to 100 because of rounding.

Table III.5: CONUS Installations by Capacity of Child Development Centers—Marine Corps (on Feb. 9, 1988)

	Installations		
Center capacity	**Number**	**Percent**	**Cumulative percent**
1 to 50	0	0	0
51 to 100	1	8	8
101 to 150	6	46	54
151 to 200	1	8	62
201 to 250	2	15	77
251 to 300	0	0	77
More than 300	3	23	100
Total	**13**	**100**	

Table III.6: CONUS Installations Offering Full-Day, Part-Day, and Hourly Care in Child Development Centers by Military Service

Figures in percent

	Installations		
Military service	**Full day**	**Part day**	**Hourly**
Air Force	100	89	100
Army	100	93	93
Navy	100	66	98
Marine Corps	100	85	100
All military services	100	83	98

Table III.7: CONUS Installations in Each Military Service by Type of Child Care Offered in Child Development Centers

	Installations				
Type of child care	Air Force	Army	Navy	Marine Corps	All military services
Weekend	55	13	15	6	89
Night	20	8	9	3	40
Extended 24-hour	8	1	0	0	9
Special needs	44	29	19	3	95
Mildly ill	14	1	3	0	18

Table III.8: Children Attending Full-Day Care and Other Care in CONUS by Military Service (on Feb. 9, 1988)

	Children				
		Full day		Other	
Military service	Total	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Air Force	14,245	6,526	46	7,719	54
Army	10,981	5,279	48	5,702	52
Navy	7,233	4,850	67	2,383	33
Marine Corps	2,692	1,752	65	940	35
Total	**35,151**	**18,407**	52	**16,744**	48

Table III.9: Children Who Were to Attend CONUS Child Development Centers for Full-Day Care by Age Group—All Military Services (on Feb. 9, 1988)

	Children		
Age group	Number	Percent	Cumulative percent
Newborn	686	3	3
Infant	2,857	14	17
Toddler	5,636	27	44
Preschool age	10,816	52	96
School age	619	3	99[1]
Total	**20,614**	**99**[a]	

[1]Percentages do not add to 100 because of rounding

Table III.10: Children Who Were to Attend CONUS Child Development Centers for Full-Day Care by Age Group—Air Force (on Feb. 9, 1988)

	Children		
Age group	Number	Percent	Cumulative percent
Newborn	138	2	2
Infant	929	13	15
Toddler	1,925	27	42
Preschool age	3,840	54	96
School age	245	3	99[1]
Total	**7,077**	**99**[a]	

[1]Percentages do not add to 100 because of rounding

Table III.11: Children Who Were to Attend CONUS Child Development Centers for Full-Day Care by Age Group—Army (on Feb. 9, 1988)

	Children		
Age group	Number	Percent	Cumulative percent
Newborn	222	4	4
Infant	788	13	17
Toddler	1,674	28	45
Preschool age	3,270	54	99
School age	99	2	101[1]
Total	**6,053**	**101[a]**	

[1]Percentages do not add to 100 because of rounding.

Table III.12: Children Who Were to Attend CONUS Child Development Centers for Full-Day Care by Age Group—Navy (on Feb. 9, 1988)

	Children		
Age group	Number	Percent	Cumulative percent
Newborn	209	4	4
Infant	804	15	19
Toddler	1,466	27	46
Preschool age	2,705	50	96
School age	262	5	101[1]
Total	**5,446**	**101[a]**	

[1]Percentages do not add to 100 because of rounding.

Table III.13: Children Who Were to Attend CONUS Child Development Centers for Full-Day Care by Age Group—Marine Corps (on Feb. 9, 1988)

	Children		
Age group	Number	Percent	Cumulative percent
Newborn	117	6	6
Infant	336	16	22
Toddler	571	28	50
Preschool age	1,001	49	99
School age	13	1	100
Total	**2,038**	**100**	

Table III.14: Children Who Were to Attend CONUS Child Development Centers for Other Than Full-Day Care by Age Group—All Military Services (on Feb. 9, 1988)

	Children		
Age group	Number	Percent	Cumulative percent
Newborn	162	1	1
Infant	1,383	7	8
Toddler	2,605	14	22
Preschool age	10,454	56	78
School age	4,045	22	100
Total	**18,649**	**100**	

Table III.15: Children Who Were to Attend CONUS Child Development Centers for Other Than Full-Day Care by Age Group—Air Force (on Feb. 9, 1988)

	Children		
Age group	Number	Percent	Cumulative percent
Newborn	8	[a]	[a]
Infant	565	8	8
Toddler	1,057	14	22
Preschool age	4,315	57	79
School age	1,541	20	99[b]
Total	**7,506**	**99[c]**	

[a]Less than 1 percent.

[b]Percentages do not add to 100 because of rounding.

Table III.16: Children Who Were to Attend CONUS Child Development Centers for Other Than Full-Day Care by Age Group—Army (on Feb. 9, 1988)

	Children		
Age group	Number	Percent	Cumulative percent
Newborn	76	1	1
Infant	561	7	8
Toddler	1,076	14	22
Preschool age	4,242	56	78
School age	1,605	21	99[a]
Total	**7,560**	**99[b]**	

[a]Percentages do not add to 100 because of rounding.

Table III.17: Children Who Were to Attend CONUS Child Development Centers for Other Than Full-Day Care by Age Group—Navy (on Feb. 9, 1988)

	Children		
Age group	Number	Percent	Cumulative percent
Newborn	57	2	2
Infant	178	7	9
Toddler	350	14	23
Preschool age	1,372	54	77
School age	595	23	100
Total	**2,552**	**100**	

Table III.18: Children Who Were to Attend CONUS Child Development Centers for Other Than Full-Day Care by Age Group—Marine Corps (on Feb. 9, 1988)

	Children		
Age group	Number	Percent	Cumulative percent
Newborn	21	2	2
Infant	59	6	8
Toddler	122	12	20
Preschool age	525	51	71
School age	304	29	100
Total	**1,031**	**100**	

Table III.19: Children Who Were to Attend CONUS Child Development Centers for Full-Day Care by Parent Characteristic[a] (on Feb. 9, 1988)

Figures in percent

	Children				
Parent characteristic	Air Force	Army	Navy	Marine Corps	All military services
Service members:					
Married	59	62	68	70	63
Dual military	19	16	13	17	16
Single	12	12	11	10	12
DOD civilian	7	8	5	2	6
Military retiree	2	2	2	1	2
Other	1	[b]	1	0	1
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

[a]Includes one installation that could not categorize children by DOD civilians and military retirees.

[b]Less than 1 percent.

Table III.20: Children Who Were to Attend CONUS Child Development Centers for Full-Day Care by Parent Characteristics (on Feb. 9, 1988)

	Children				
Parent characteristic	Air Force	Army	Navy	Marine Corps	All military services
Service members					
Married	4,179	3,758	3,709	1,434	13,080
Dual military	1,341	962	703	344	3,350
Single	853	717	608	215	2,393
DOD civilian	488	462	286	35	1,271
Military retiree	120	121	82	10	333
Other	96	33[1]	58	0	187
Total	**7,077**	**6,053**	**5,446**	**2,038**	**20,614**

[1]Includes one installation that could not categorize children by DOD civilians and military retirees.

Table III.21: Surveyed CONUS Installations With Family Day Care Homes by Capacity of Homes (on Feb. 9, 1988)

	Installations		
Home capacity	Number	Percent	Cumulative percent
1 to 150	74	59	59
151 to 300	28	22	81
301 to 450	14	11	92
451 to 600	5	4	96
More than 600	5	4	100
Total	**126**	**100**	

Table III.22: Surveyed CONUS Installations Offering Full-Day, Part-Day, and Hourly Care in Family Day Care Home Programs by Military Service

	Installations						
		Full day		Part day		Hourly	
Military service	Total	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Air Force	58	58	100	57	98	57	98
Army	50	50	100	49	98	48	96
Navy	12	12	100	11	92	11	92
Marine Corps	6	6	100	6	100	5	83
Total	**126**	**126**	100	**123**	98	**121**	96

Table III.23: Surveyed CONUS Installations Offering Full-Day, Part-Day, and Hourly Care in Family Day Care Home Programs by Age Group

	Installations						
		Full day		Part day		Hourly	
Age group	Total	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Newborn	126	122	97	107	85	111	88
Infant	126	125	99	115	91	117	93
Toddler	126	126	100	117	93	118	94
Preschool age	126	125	99	120	95	119	94

Table III.24: Surveyed CONUS Installations in Each Military Service by Type of Child Care Offered in Family Day Care Home Programs

	Installations				
Type of child care	Air Force	Army	Navy	Marine Corps	All military services
Weekend	56	47	9	4	116
Night	56	45	11	4	116
Extended 24-hour	38	46	6	4	94
Special needs	38	36	4	2	80
Mildly ill	46	33	6	2	87

Table III.25: Children That Could Attend CONUS Child Development Centers at the Same Time by Military Service (End of Fiscal Year 1984 Through Feb. 9, 1988)

	Children				
	End of fiscal year				Feb. 9,
Military service	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
Air Force	13,420	13,790	14,475	15,014	15,241
Army	8,925	10,043	11,241	12,252	12,299
Navy	6,221	6,738	7,256	7,854	7,912
Marine Corps	2,185	2,130	2,346	2,830	3,053
Total	**30,751**	**32,701**	**35,318**	**37,950**	**38,505**

Table III.26: Growth in the Surveyed CONUS Family Day Care Home Programs by Military Service (End of Fiscal Year 1984 Through Feb. 9, 1988)

	End of fiscal year 1984		Feb. 9, 1988	
Military service	Homes	Capacity	Homes	Capacity
Air Force	163	732	1,659	7,925
Army	586	2,556	2,487	13,456
Navy	15	75	264	1,486
Marine Corps	0	0	147	852
Total	**764**	**3,363**	**4,557**	**23,719**

Table III.27: Children Waiting for CONUS Child Development Center Care by Military Service (on Feb. 9, 1988)

	Children				
Military service	Total	Full day	Part day	Preschool	Other
Air Force	5,439	3,345	368	1,726	0
Army	7,861	6,577	483	799	2
Navy	8,377	7,019	351	975	32
Marine Corps	3,052	2,449	338	265	0
Total	**24,729**	**19,390**	**1,540**	**3,765**	**34**

Table III.28: CONUS Installations That Have Waiting Lists for Child Development Center Care by Number of Children Waiting for Care—All Military Services

	Installations		
Number of children waiting for care	Number	Percent	Cumulative percent
0	1	1	1
1 to 50	67	36	37
51 to 100	34	18	55
101 to 150	27	15	70
151 to 200	17	9	79
201 to 250	15	8	87
251 to 300	7	4	91
301 to 350	6	3	94
351 to 400	2	1	95
401 to 450	1	1	96
451 to 500	4	2	98
More than 500	4	2	100
Total	**185**	**100**	

Table III.29: CONUS Installations That Have Waiting Lists for Child Development Center Care by Number of Children Waiting for Care—Air Force

	Installations		
Number of children waiting for care	Number	Percent	Cumulative percent
0	1	2	2
1 to 50	30	48	50
51 to 100	12	19	69
101 to 150	7	11	80
151 to 200	5	8	88
201 to 250	3	5	93
251 to 300	2	3	96
301 to 350	3	5	101[a]
Total	**63**	**101[a]**	

[a]Percentages do not add to 100 because of rounding

Table III.30: CONUS Installations That Have Waiting Lists for Child Development Center Care by Number of Children Waiting for Care—Army

	Installations		
Number of children waiting for care	Number	Percent	Cumulative percent
0	0	0	0
1 to 50	21	40	40
51 to 100	11	21	61
101 to 150	6	11	72
151 to 200	3	6	78
201 to 250	3	6	84
251 to 300	2	4	88
301 to 350	2	4	92
351 to 400	2	4	96
401 to 450	0	0	96
451 to 500	0	0	96
More than 500	3	6	102[1]
Total	**53**	**102[a]**	

[1]Percentages do not add to 100 because of rounding

Table III.31: CONUS Installations That Have Waiting Lists for Child Development Center Care by Number of Children Waiting for Care—Navy

	Installations		
Number of children waiting for care	Number	Percent	Cumulative percent
0	0	0	0
1 to 50	13	23	23
51 to 100	7	12	35
101 to 150	12	21	56
151 to 200	9	16	72
201 to 250	7	12	84
251 to 300	3	5	89
301 to 350	1	2	91
351 to 400	0	0	91
401 to 450	1	2	93
451 to 500	3	5	98[1]
Total	**56**	**98[a]**	

[1]Percentages do not add to 100 because of rounding

Table III.32: CONUS Installations That Have Waiting Lists for Child Development Center Care by Number of Children Waiting for Care—Marine Corps

	Installations		
Number of children waiting for care	Number	Percent	Cumulative percent
0	0	0	0
1 to 50	3	23	23
51 to 100	4	31	54
101 to 150	2	15	69
151 to 200	0	0	69
201 to 250	2	15	84
251 to 300	0	0	84
301 to 350	0	0	84
351 to 400	0	0	84
401 to 450	0	0	84
451 to 500	1	8	92
More than 500	1	8	100
Total	**13**	**100**	

Comments From the Department of Defense

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON D.C. 20301-4000

FORCE MANAGEMENT AND PERSONNEL

22 DEC 1988

Mr. Lawrence H. Thompson
Assistant Comptroller General
U.S. General Accounting Office
Washington, D. C. 20548

Dear Mr. Thompson:

This is the Department of Defense (DoD) response to the General Accounting Office (GAO) draft report "DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE MILITARY CHILD CARE: Large, Diverse, and Growing," dated December 1988 (GAO Code 118198), OSD Case 7727-A. The DoD concurs with this draft report. There is, however, one important point that needs to be clarified and emphasized in this report -- i.e., that only continental United States (CONUS) installations were surveyed. It should also be pointed out that the 250 CONUS installations that were not surveyed were the smaller ones, with lower numbers of military personnel. Many of these smaller installations do not have a large enough population to support a child care program, and are predominantly staffed with civilians. These notations will prevent readers from generalizing the findings and statistical data to worldwide military child care operations.

The current demand for military child care requires that the DoD develop all types of child care delivery systems. As noted in this report, there are limits to the expansion of Military Service family day care home programs. The DoD will continue to (1) seek Congressional support to upgrade and replace inadequate centers, and (2) expand center-based care by constructing new facilities. All available options must be pursued as the Department strives to respond to the growing demand for quality developmental child care at affordable prices.

The DoD comments on the specific report findings are provided in the enclosure. (Suggested technical and factual changes to the report were separately provided at the December 8 meeting with the GAO staff.) The DoD appreciates the opportunity to comment on the draft report.

Sincerely,

David J. Armor
Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense

Enclosure:
As Stated

GAO DRAFT REPORT - DATED NOVEMBER 15, 1988
(GAO CODE 118198) OSD CASE 7727-A

"DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE MILITARY CHILD CARE: LARGE, DIVERSE AND GROWING"

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COMMENTS

* * * *

FINDINGS

FINDING A: Military Child Care Is Changing. The GAO observed that, in 1978, child care was first recognized as an official morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) activity eligible for DoD funding. The GAO reported that the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Military Manpower and Personnel Policy) has the primary responsibility for administering MWR programs, including child care funding and construction policy. The Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Family Support, Education and Safety) develops overall DoD child care policies, while each Service develops its own program policies and standards. The GAO further reported that, when child care services are provided, each installation sets its own operating procedures, in accordance with DoD and Service guidance. The GAO found that child care is provided primarily in two settings: child development centers and family day care homes. The GAO reported that, in child development centers, care is provided by trained care-givers on a fee-for-service basis, collected by each center. The GAO further reported that, in authorized family day care homes, a private individual (usually a military spouse) provides care for up to six children in Government housing, with all arrangements made between the care-giver and the family. The GAO found that the Air Force and Army have a more centralized system of monitoring child care program activities than the Navy and the Marine Corps, noting that the Air Force requires semiannual reports from installations while the Army and Navy require annual reports. The GAO noted that the Marine Corps collects data less frequently, through surveys of installation child care programs. (pp. 16-20/GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 12-14

DoD Response: Concur.

FINDING B: Why DoD Provides Child Care. The GAO found that the DoD provides a variety of MWR activities (including child care) to Service members and their families to:

- improve the quality of life;

- promote and maintain Service member social and mental well being;

- enhance job proficiency;

- contribute to military effectiveness; and

- maintain readiness.

The GAO found that more than half of the people it interviewed experienced a variety of problems when their children could not receive military child development center care, including late arrival, economic hardship, and decreased productivity. The GAO also noted that, because military families are required to move periodically, they normally cannot rely on an extended family to care for their children and do not have the support of an established neighborhood. The GAO also reported that private sector child care often does not meet the special needs of the military because it may be inconveniently located or too expensive. (The GAO noted that the DoD has stated that military child care should be offered at lower cost than comparable private sector programs, saving members 20 to 25 percent.) (pp. 25-28/GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 17-18

DoD Response: Concur.

FINDING C: Determining the Need for Child Care Programs.

The GAO found that each installation determines whether child care programs should be established and maintained. The GAO reported that, every three years, installations must review and establish priorities for all MWR activities, including child care. According to the GAO, in identifying child care needs, installation commanders rely most heavily on lists of children waiting for care. (pp. 28-29/GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 18-19

DoD Response: Concur.

FINDING D: Program Funding. The GAO found that child care programs receive support from two sources: (1) appropriated funds primarily provided by operations and maintenance and military construction appropriations, and (2) nonappropriated funds generated principally by sales, fees, and charges to authorized participants. The GAO noted that, in FY 1987, about one-third of DoD total child development center operating costs were met with Congressional appropriations totaling $43.6 million. The GAO reported that current DoD data show that the average weekly center charges for child care in the Services range from $40 to $60 and are designed specifically to be generally lower than those available for comparable services in the private

Now on p. 19

sector. The GAO noted that family day care homes are primarily supported by parent user fees paid directly to the care-giver. Oversight costs are funded by the Military Services. (pp. 30-31/GAO Draft Report)

DoD Response: Concur.

FINDING E: CONUS Child Care Capacity. The GAO found that, in the continental U.S., military installations have a total child care capacity for 62,000 children, consisting of child development center capacity of 38,000 and family day care homes serving 24,000. The GAO also found that, at most installation centers, child care services were not equally available to all children and were not available on weekends, at night, for extended periods, or for mildly ill or handicapped children. The GAO noted that many of these services were more often available in installation family day care home programs. The GAO found that three-fourths or more of the home programs offered weekend, night, or extended care, while 60 percent offered care for children who are mentally ill or handicapped. (pp. 33-34/GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 20-21

DoD Response: Concur.

FINDING F: CONUS Child Development Centers. The GAO reported that the child development centers it surveyed offered a variety of services and had the capacity to care for 38,505 children, with the average center having a capacity for 181 children. The following table lists a number of the services offered, along with the percentage of installations that GAO found provides the service:

Day Care Service	Installation Providing (percent)
Full-Day (5 Hours or More)	100
Hourly	98
Part-Day	83
24-Hour Extended	4
Night	19
Weekend	42

The GAO found that nearly all installations (99 percent) offered full-day and hourly care for infants (6 to 17 months), toddlers (18 to 35 months) and preschoolers (3 to 5 years), but only 68 percent offered full-day care, and only 26 percent offered part-day care for newborns (birth to five months). The GAO also noted that:

- 52 percent of the 35,000 children receiving day care attended for the full day; and

- 90 percent or more of the children receiving full-day

care in each Service has at least one parent who was a Service member;

The GAO provided the following breakout of parent characteristics for children attending centers for the full day:

Parent Characteristics	Percent Children
Active Duty Married	63
Dual Military	16
Single	12
DoD Civilian	6
Other	3
Total:	100

While noting that civilian DoD employee children make up only 6 percent of all children receiving full-day care, the GAO identified on Navy installation where, due to the large number of civilians employed there, 95 percent of the children attending full-day care were DoD civilian dependents. (pp. 34-41/GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 21-25

DoD Response: Concur. The Services have indicated that all military child care centers have the capability of providing 24-hour care when necessary. This is a command and control issue which links military child care center operations directly to mission requirements.

FINDING G: CONUS Family Day Care Home Programs. The GAO found that, on February 9, 1988, 126 installations operated 4,557 family day care homes, all offering full-day care, with a capacity to serve 23,719 children. The GAO also found that the Army was the largest provider of family day care home programs, with a total of 2,387, having a capacity to serve 13,456 children. The GAO noted that the Army was the only Service having a home care program capacity larger than its center program. The GAO identified the following characteristics associated with family day care home programs:

- they all offered full-day care and most offered part-day and hourly care;
- part-day care was more often available in homes than centers;
- home programs, in general, more frequently offered care to the youngest children compared wth centers; and
- 97 percent of the installations offered home care to newborns.

The following table provides the GAO profile of services offered by home care programs broken out by age group:

Age Group	Percentage of Installations Providing Service		
	Full Day	Part Day	Hourly
Newborn	97	85	88
Infant	99	91	93
Toddler	100	93	94
Preschool	99	95	94

The GAO also noted that child care on weekends, at night, and for extended 24-hour periods was more available in family home programs than in centers. (pp. 42-46/GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 25-27

DoD Response: Concur.

FINDING H: Other Groups and Organizations With Child Care Services on Installations. The GAO found that, in addition to child care provided through centers and family day care homes, 197 of 213 installations with child development centers also had youth activities programs. The GAO further found that on 31 percent of the installations with centers, other groups and organizations (such as chapels, officer wives clubs and parent cooperatives) provided some type of child care. The following table provides the GAO breakout of these programs, by Service:

Military Service	Percentage of Installations With:	
	Youth Activity Programs	Other Programs
Air Force	99	12
Army	100	62
Navy	81	23
Marine Corps	77	54
All Services	92	31

(pp. 46-47/GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 27-28

DoD Response: Concur.

FINDING I: Program Growth. The GAO reported that each year the number of children receiving care in DoD installation-based programs increases. The GAO noted that, between the end of FY 1984 and February 9, 1988, the capacity of military installation child care programs in the continental United States increased by 82 percent -- from 34,000 to 62,000 children. The GAO observed that the capacity of child development centers increased by 25 percent, while family day care home program capacity grew by more than 600 percent. The GAO found that child development centers are likely to continue to attract Service members seeking child care, noting that over 24,700 children were on

waiting lists in February 1988. The GAO reported that future growth in military child care programs depends on:

- the DoD attempts to provide child care to all interested Service members; and

- the availability of additional funds.

The GAO noted that, between FY 1985 and FY 1987, Federally supported operating costs grew by about 39 percent and $91 million was obligated for center construction projects. The GAO also observed that the potential for family day care home program growth exists, at a smaller cost, as long as housing units are available on installations and individuals are willing to provide the care. The GAO reported that, in response to demand for military child care, many installations have requests to expand or renovate existing child development centers or construct new ones; and family day care home programs have expanded, as well. (pp. 48-49/GAO Draft Report)

Now on p. 29

DoD Response: Concur. The current demand for military child care requires DoD and Congressional support for the development of all types of child care delivery systems.

FINDING J: Child Development Center Capacity Growth. The GAO found that, at the end of FY 1984, military child development centers had the capacity to serve 30,751 children at one time and by February 9, 1988, the center-based child care program capacity had increased by 25 percent, to 38,505. The GAO noted that, between FY 1985 and FY 1986, operating costs for child development centers worldwide also increased, from $101.6 million to $134.3 million, with Federally appropriated funds increasing by about 39 percent from $31.4 million in FY 1985 to $43.6 million in FY 1987. The GAO also found that, during the period FY 1985 through FY 1987, 175 installations requested Federal funds to construct a new child development center or expand an existing one, noting that about $91 million was obligated for 55 child development construction projects, including 25 in the continental United States valued at $47.3 million. The GAO concluded that, if additional Federal funding is provided, child development center capacity should continue to grow because center services (1) may not be available in the private sector, (2) are designed to be low cost and conveniently located, and (3) Service members continue to place their names on waiting lists for center-based care. (pp. 50-52/GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 30-31

DoD Response: Concur. Many of the child development centers built by the Military Services have been replacement facilities designed to eliminate health and safety deficiencies. These projects have not significantly increased overall child development center capacity.

FINDING K: Family Day Care Home Program Capacity Growth. The GAO reported that, between the end of FY 1984 and February 1988, the installations it contacted experienced a five-fold growth in family day care homes, from 764 to 4,557; with capacity increasing by more than six times, from 3,363 to 23,719 children. The GAO observed, however, that the rate of growth has declined from 150 percent in FY 1985 to 61 percent in FY 1987. The GAO concluded that continued growth of the family day care home program depends on the following:

- the availability of Government housing units;
- the willingness of individuals to provide care;
- individual installation commitment to the program; and
- installation ability to oversee and monitor program activity.

The GAO further concluded that the family day care program can serve additional children without a significant commitment of Federal resources for facility construction or operating costs. (pp. 52-53/GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 31-32

DoD Response: Concur. Expansion of the family day care program requires appropriations for positions to serve as coordinators and monitors of the program. At the time of this survey, the Air Force family day care program was in early implementation stages. The number of licensed homes has increased from 1,659 to 3,113, and the capacity of the homes from 7,925 to 12,443. The Army family day care home program has increased 465 percent since 1982. The Army projects a minimal increase in total numbers of day care homes on Army installations since capacity has almost been reached.

FINDING L: Demographic Data Show A Large Eligible Population. The GAO reported that, in 1985, the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) estimated that worldwide the military deployed 289,900 families with children 12 years old or younger, who accompanied their parents on their tour of duty. The GAO noted that these families consisted of (1) 31,000 active single parents, (2) 41,200 couples with both parents in the military, and (3) 217,600 Service members with working civilian spouses. The GAO reported that the 1985 Defense Manpower Data Center survey estimated that all Service members, including those with non-working civilian spouses, had about 978,200 children under age 13 eligible to use military child care services. The GAO found that parents cited a number of reasons for wanting military child care, including location, lower cost, and better quality. The GAO reported that, despite the growth in child

development centers, 185 of the 213 installations it studied maintained waiting lists of children up to age 12, which totaled 24,729 children. The GAO noted that 4 percent of the children on the list were not yet born. (The GAO qualified its use of waiting lists as an indicator of interest in child care by stating that they are useful for gross approximation of potential program growth.) The GAO concluded that child care is likely to continue to be an important issue in the military for years to come. (pp. 54-60/GAO Draft Report)

Now on pp. 32-35

DoD Response: Concur.

FINDING M: How Children Are Selected To Receive Center-Based Care. The GAO reported that DoD Instruction 1015.2, dated May 17, 1985, prioritizes 15 categories of individuals eligible to participate in MWR activities, including child development center programs with top priority going to active duty military personnel. The GAO found that, within this group, 53 percent of the programs accept children on a first-come, first-served basis; while 47 percent establish subpriorities, generally related to parent care options available, with single parents given first preference, followed by families with both parents in the military. (pp. 61-62/GAO Draft Report)

Now on p. 36

DoD Response: Concur.

FINDING N: Matters For Congressional Consideration. The GAO found that the attractiveness of military center-based child care, reflected by the high demand, requires long-range decision-making by the military and the Congress on the extent of military child care that should be made available and the amount of appropriated fund support that should be provided. The GAO noted that the DOD and the Congress must determine if military child care should be available to all parents who want this care. The GAO concluded that the costs of military child care must be balanced against the military stated benefits of maintaining readiness, reducing lost duty time, and improving the quality of life for Service members and their families. The GAO also concluded that, in the interim, where center capacity is not adequate, installations may need to continue to expand family day care home programs. (pp. 62-63/GAO Draft Report)

Now on p. 36

DoD Response: Concur. While it is essential to expand family day care programs wherever possible, this effort can not replace or meet the need for center-based child care. The current demand for miliary child care requires that inadequate centers be upgraded or replaced, and new centers be constructed. All child care options must continue to be developed by DoD, with the support of Congress. On DoD installations, the most cost-effective approach to meeting

the needs of both military and civilian personnel is through operation of one program that addresses the needs of both groups. Future expansion of DoD child development programs will consider the needs of the Total Force.

RECOMMENDATIONS

NONE.

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